

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LUSAKA 02577 280811Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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O R 280702Z AUG 77  
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AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE  
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AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY PETORIA IMMEDIATE  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 2577

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS  
TAGS: PDEV RH US UK  
SUBJECT: PRESIDEDT KAUNDA'S REACTION TO FRONTLINE MEETING  
WITH OWEN

REF: DAR ES SALAAM 3501

1. SUMMARY: KAUNDA CALLED ME IN TO EXPRESS HIS GREAT CONCERN  
TO PRESIDENT CARTER OVER IMMINENT PUBLICATION OF THE UK  
PROPOSAL WITHOUT IT REFLECTING THE VIEWS OF THE FRONTLINE  
PRESIDENTS. I EXPLAINED OUR GREAT CONCERN OVER THE POSSIBILITY  
OF SMITH'S OPTING FOR AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AND CONSEQUENT  
DESIRE THAT NOTHING COME OUT OF THE MEETING WHICH WOULD MAKE  
THE PROPOSAL CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND  
RHODESIANS AND I REVIEWED OUR PROPOSAL THAT THE RHODESIANS  
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PAGE 02 LUSAKA 02577 280811Z

DEFENSE FORCE BE GRADUALLY REPLACED DURING THE TRANSITION  
PERIOD BY A NEW ARMY BASED ON THE LIBERATION FORCES AND  
ACCEPTABLE TO THE INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT. HE EXPRESSED  
HIMSELF AS COMPLETELY SATISFIED WITH MY EXPLANATION AND  
WITHDREW HIS OBJECTION TO PUBLICATION OF THE PROPOSAL.  
END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT KAUNDA ASKED THAT I COME TO SEE HIM SATURDAY NIGHT IMMEDIATELY ON HIS RETURN FROM AIRPORT AFTER SEEING NYERERE OFF. THE ONLY OTHER PERSON PRESENT DURING THE CONVERSATION WAS PRESS SECRETARY PUNABANTU.

3. KAUNDA STARTED OFF BY EXPRESSING HIS DEEP CONCERN OVER THE EVENTS OF THE DAY. HE AND NYERERE HAD DECIDED TO EXPRESS THESE CONCERNS TO THE AMERICAN AMBASSADORS BECAUSE OF THEIR HIGH REGARD FOR PRESIDENT CARTER. KAUNDA REPEATED HIS OWN PERSONAL FEELINGS OF RESPECT FOR THE PRESIDENT WHOM HE AGAIN CALLED "BREATH OF FRESH AIR". HE SAID HE DID NOT MAKE A PRACTICE OF TRYING TO DIVIDE THE US AND THE BRITISH BUT HE FELT HE HAD TO BE HONEST IN EXPRESSING HIS DISAPPOINTMENT OVER THE MEETINGS TODAY. I CONFIRMED HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE BRITISH WERE PLANNING TO PUBLIC THEIR PROPOSAL THURSDAY. HE SAID OWEN HAD GIVEN THE FRONTLINE A FAIR ACCOMPLISHMENT. HE HAD MADE HIS PROPOSAL ON A TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT BASIS WITHOUT CONSIDERING THEIR VIEWS. THE BRITISH SHOULD GET THE FRONTLINE'S AGREEMENT AND THAT OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND THEN THAT OF SMITH BEFORE PUBLISHING THE PROPOSALS. KAUNDA SAID THAT HE WANTED TO GET THIS WORD TO PRESIDENT CARTER SO THAT HE WOULD UNDERSTAND WHEN HE HEARD FROM THE BRITISH THAT THE FRONTLINE HAD REJECTED THE PROPOSAL.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LUSAKA 02577 280811Z

4. I ASKED THE PRESIDENT WHETHER HE BELIEVED IT WAS THE BRITISH VIEW THAT THE PLAN HAD BEEN REJECTED BY THE FRONTLINE. HE REPLIED THAT THEY COULD NOT HAVE ANY OTHER OPINION IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THEIR PROPOSAL DID NOT DO WHAT THE FRONTLINE THOUGHT WAS NECESSARY ABOUT THE MATTER OF AN ARMY FOR THE INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE. I SAID THAT I HAD JUST DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH ANDY YOUNG AND THOUGHT PERHAPS I COULD GIVE HIM SOME BACKGROUND. WE WERE VERY CONCERNED THAT, AS THE PRESIDENT WELL KNEW, THERE WAS A REAL DANGER OF SMITH WAS MOVING IRREVOCABLY TOWARDS AN INTERNAL OPTION WITH SITHOLE. WE FELT THAT SUCH A STEP WOULD BE A TERRIBLE MISTAKE AND WOULD LEAD US IN A MOST UNFORTUNATE DIRECTION WHICH WOULD NOT BRING AN END TO THE WAR OR PROSPERITY AND STABILITY TO ZIMBABWE. THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WOULD BE CRITICAL. IT WAS THEREFORE VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE PROPOSAL WE WERE MAKING WAS ONE WHICH COULD BE ACCEPTED IN PRETORIA AND SALISBURG. DURING THE CONVERSATION TODAY FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN HAD BEEN CONCERNED THAT NOTHING COME OUT OF THE MEETING WHICH WOULD LEAD THE PEOPLE AT HIS FORTHCOMING STOPS IN PRETORIA AND SALISBURY TO REJECT THE PROPOSAL. HOWEVER, I FELT THAT THE PRESIDENT COULD BE ASSURED THAT THERE WAS NO DIFFERENCE IN SUBSTANCE

BETWEEN HIS VIEWS AS I UNDERSTOOD THEM AND THOSE OF FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN. THOSE VIEWS CONFORMED TO THE ONES EXPRESSED BY PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN IN THE LETTER WHICH THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER AND I HAD RECENTLY DELIVERED TO THE PRESIDENT. THEY MADE CLEAR THAT THE RHODESIAN DEFENSE FORCES WOULD GRADUALLY DISAPPEAR AS A CONSTITUTED FORCE DURING THE COURSE OF THE TRANSITION PERIOD. AT THE SAME TIME A NEW ZIMBABWE DEFENSE FORCE WOULD BE BUILT UP BASED ON THE LIBERATION FORCES BUT INCLUDING ELEMENTS OF THE RHODESIAN DEFENSE FORCES. BY THE TIME OF INDEPENDENCE A NEW ARMY SHOULD BE CREATED WHICH WAS ACCEPTABLE TO AN INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT AND WOULD BE THE ONLY FORCE IN THE COUNTRY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 LUSAKA 02577 280811Z

5. KAUNDA WHO HAS BEEN LISTENING CAREFULLY, NODDED HIS HEAD AS I WENT THROUGH THE POINTS. HE SAID THIS WAS INDEED WHAT HE AND THE OTHER FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS HAS BEEN SEEKING AND IF I COULD ASSURE HIM THAT THIS WAS THE VIEW OF THE BRITISH THEN HE HAD NO FURTHER CONCERNS AND COULD REST BETTER TONIGHT. I SAID I DID NOT HAVE A COPY OF THE PROPOSAL WITH ME AND COULD NOT REMEMBER THE EXACT WORDING BUT I BELIEVE THAT WHILE IT DID NOT TREAT THIS MATTER IN DETAIL IT DID STATE THAT THE EXISTING FORCES WOULD BE REPLACED BY A NEW ARMY ACCEPTABLE TO THE INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE. I ASKED THE PRESIDENT WHETHER IN VIEW OF HIS UNDERSTANDING HE STILL FELT IT WAS A MISTAKE TO PUBLISH THE PROPOSALS ON THURSDAY, AND HE REPLIED THAT HE SAW NO FURTHER REASON WHY THE BRITISH SHOULD NOT PROCEED AS PLANNED.

6. COMMENT: IT WAS QUITE EVIDENT TO US THAT KAUNDA WHO IS A VOLATILE PERSON BECAME ANGERED AT AN EARLY POINT DURING OWENS PRESENTATION THIS MORNING. AS HE DOES ON SUCH OCCASIONS HE COMPLETELY TURNED OFF THE CONVERSATION FROM THAT POINT ON AND OBVIOUSLY DID NOT HEAR OWENS STATEMENTS. NOTHING I SAID DURING THE EVENING WAS DIFFERENT FROM WHAT OWEN HAD SAID. KAUNDA DID NOT SEEK TO DISCUSS THE DETAILS OF THE PLAN WHICH MIGHT STILL LEAD TO AMBIGUITY SUCH AS WHAT THE EXACT PROPORTION BETWEEN LIBERATION FORCES AND RHODESIAN DEFENSE FORCES IN THE NEW ZIMBABWE ARMY WOULD BE. HE SIMPLY ACCEPTED THE PHRASE "BASED ON THE LIBERATION ARMIES BUT OPEN TO INCLUSION OF ELEMENTS FROM THE RHODESIAN DEFENSE FORCES" AT FACE VALUE. IN VIEW OF NYERERE'S CONTINUED DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PLAN AS HE UNDERSTANDS IT

AS EXPRESSED TO JIM SPAIN AFTER THE MEETING, AMBASSADOR YOUNG ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE AND I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD SEEK  
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 05 LUSAKA 02577 280811Z

TO CONFIRM KAUNDA'S UNDERSTANDING SUNDAY. WE WILL ATTEMPT  
TO SET UP A FURTHER MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT BEFORE  
DEPARTURE FOR PRETORIA AFTER CONSULTATION WITH  
THE BRITISH.  
LOW

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